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Application. No. 10/678,172  
Amendment dated June 21, 2007  
Reply to Office Action of April 12, 2007

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A programming device for RFID transponders disposed on a web comprising:

a) a strip transmission line comprising:

i) a central conductor having a top and a bottom surface;

ii) a first dielectric layer having a top and a bottom surface substantially parallel to one another and having a predetermined first thickness, said bottom surface being disposed adjacent said top surface of said central conductor;

iii) a second dielectric layer having a top and a bottom surface substantially parallel to one another and having a predetermined second thickness and a second dielectric constant, said top surface being disposed adjacent said bottom surface of said central conductor;

iv) at least one ground plane disposed proximate said top surface of said first dielectric layers and said bottom surface of said second dielectric layer, said strip transmission line having a characteristic impedance defined by at least one of the factors: said first thickness, said second thickness, said first dielectric constant, and said second dielectric constant; and

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b) a housing substantially surrounding said strip transmission line having an opening disposed adjacent said central conductor adapted to receive an RFID transponder therein; whereby, upon application of an RF programming signal to said central conductor, an RF field is generated and a first RFID transponder inserted into said opening may be programmed thereby while said RF field is of insufficient intensity to program any other RFID transponders adjacent said first RFID transponder.

Claim 2 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 1, wherein said first RFID transponder and said adjacent RFID transponders are supported on a web.

Claim 3 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 2, wherein said strip transmission line comprises at least one of the configurations: linear, U-shaped, and meandering strip transmission lines.

Claim 4 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 3, wherein said strip transmission line further comprises a terminating impedance, operatively connected between said central conductor and at least one of said at least one ground planes.

Claim 5 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 4, wherein said terminating impedance comprises a terminating resistor.

Claim 6 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 5, wherein said terminating resistor is external to said housing.

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Claim 7 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 3, wherein said opening comprises a substantially rectangular channel extending completely through said housing, disposed substantially perpendicular to said central conductor of said strip line and sized and adapted to receive said web.

Claim 8 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 7, wherein said housing comprises a housing separable in a plane substantially parallel to adjacent said central conductor.

Claim 9 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 8, further comprising a hinge along an edge of said housing and substantially in said plane of separation.

Claim 10 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 8, wherein said rectangular channel is exposed when said separable housing is separated whereby said web may be inserted into said rectangular channel.

Claim 11 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 3, wherein said opening comprises a slot extending completely along a face of said housing, said slot being sized and configured to receive said web therein.

Claim 12 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 11, wherein said slot further comprises an end cap removably attachable to said housing and extending substantially along the length of said slot.

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Claim 13 (original): The programming device for RFID transponders as recited in claim 12, wherein said end cap is electrically conductive and adapted, when in place, to create an electrical connection between a first portion of said housing adjacent an upper portion of said slot and a lower portion of said housing adjacent a lower portion of said slot.

Claim 14 (currently amended): A method for programming RFID transponders disposed on a web, said RFID transponders having a programming device in accordance with claim 1, the steps comprising:

a) providing ~~an~~ said RFID programming device ~~comprising a housing, a transmission line disposed within said housing, and an opening adjacent said transmission line adapted to receive a web carrying a plurality of RFID transponders disposed adjacent one another;~~

b) inserting a portion of said web carrying said ~~plurality of~~ any other RFID transponders into said opening; and

c) supplying at least an RF programming signal to said transmission line; whereby an RFID transponder adjacent said transmission line is programmed by an RF field generated by said RF programming signal and surrounding said transmission line, said RF field being constrained by at least the configuration of said housing and the configuration of said transmission line such that said RF field is insufficient for programming any other RFID transponder on said web.

Claim 15 (original): The method for programming RFID transponders disposed on a web as recited in claim 14, wherein said transmission line is one of the types: strip, and microstrip transmission line.